

Kurt's clinic

Kurt Hertzog answers readers' questions

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KURT HERTZOG



1 I have eight CD storage racks that hold most of my pen stock. They are on top of workbenches at a convenient viewing height **2** Wood that has bark or other potential of bugs gets stored outdoors. End grain sealed, stacked off the ground, and weather covered (except to photo) **3** End grain sealing my newest stash of Norfolk Island pine. Leave everything in the longest manageable size

I've become overrun by my shop storage of wood. I'm my own worst enemy at seeing and buying or collecting wood that is too good to pass by. Do you have any storage ideas that work better than others?

I am guilty of the exact same thing. I rarely see a piece of wood that I don't like. Even when I'm turning a lot, I never seem to diminish my supply as it grows faster than usage. I store my wood in several areas and by several means depending on the current condition of the wood. Green wood that is in log form, large rounds, or barked enough to potentially contain any 'critters' is stored outdoors. I have several pads constructed from patio blocks in the back yard, so the wood stays off the ground. It is always Anchorsealed and covered by weatherproof tarps, except for photos for this article. It will continue to dry, albeit slowly being end grain sealed, and the covering only helps keep the rain and snow off. I always leave logs or pieces as large as I can manage. I have a chain fall over my large lathe but no way to move heavy stuff outside. Green wood is left as large or as long as possible, and chainsawed as needed. Wood that is dry and ready for use can be stored indoors. Larger pieces often sit on the concrete floor of the garage. That serves as a shop where my largest lathe is setup. Since it is indoors but unheated, the wood is fine being piled as neatly as possible until needed for use. I have several stainless-steel food service racks that I store wood on, both in the garage and in my main shop in the basement. These large, roll around, floor to almost ceiling racks are capable of thousands of pounds of load. While I don't

move them, often assembling them without the casters, they offer an unimpeded view from all sides of the contents. I try to organise these racks by potential wood use, species, and size. Bowl rounds that are cut and ready for use are stacked in one area while exotic woods in waxed blocks are piled in another. I use quite a bit of African blackwood for lidded boxes, finials, stands, and accents, so there is quite a bit of storage for that. Nearly all waxed and usually in 4 by 4 by whatever length. In among all of that, I store my flat stock as best I can with the remainder leaning on the walls. I leave all wood in full length and size until I need to cut it for the final use. With all that wood, pads out back, floor storage in the garage, several floor-to-ceiling racks, there is still need for additional wood storage. Long ago I purchased CD storage racks and located a row of them on top of two workbenches butted against a shop wall. From bench top to ceiling and running the length of both benches being butted side by side provides a huge number of cubbies for sorted storage. These racks work great for storing pen blank materials whether cut or in some length. Easy to display for locating the blank(s) needed while still allowing the use of the front half of the workbench surfaces. I organise these by species, size, and stabilised or not. Having all these various storage locations and methods still hasn't solved my needs but it has reduced some of the clutter. Regardless of the storage method, it is basically a volumetric problem. Until we get to freeze-dried wood that can be rehydrated when needed, I fear the wood hoarders like myself will always have more wood than storage.

I'm having a terrible time with my adhesives curing in the bottles. I don't seem to get any real lifetime out of them even though I cap them between uses. How do you deal with your adhesives? Any tricks?

Over the years, I've learned a lot about buying and using adhesives. Usually the hard way. Two should be obvious but critical suggestions I'll share are buy as fresh as you can and buy in reasonable sizes. Buying your adhesive, any family whether Ca, polyurethane, aliphatic resins, or any other, in a location where it has been sitting for a long time, likely already hurts yourself. Buy in a place where there isn't dust covering the bottles. High turnover of the product so you are getting something fresh is your goal. If there is a use-by or factory production date that is decipherable, locate the stuff that is the newest. The other fallacy regarding adhesives is that the economies of scale are always in your best interest. Of course, you can save money by purchasing the larger sizes but what did you save if the bottle is only half gone when the rest of the unused turns to rock? Buy in sizes where you will use the entire package within a reasonable time and within its open package lifetime. With the fresh stock and reasonable sizes behind you, you are faced with maximising the open life in the shop. Depending on the curing process, you are faced with environmental issues. High humidity and high temperature are the enemy of most adhesives. Store them in a cool, dark place. Even though light, especially sunlight, doesn't cure anything except UV curing products, I try to store adhesives not currently in use on a shelf out of the sun and away from any excess heat. Help? Don't know but it can't hurt. I can't vouch for the storing of Ca adhesives in a refrigerator or freezer. There are those who espouse it, but I can't offer any firsthand experience. I'm perhaps a heretic but I often leave any open Ca bottles uncapped. I find that the adhesive in the nozzle will drain back into the container and the Ca lifetime seems to be the same, capped or uncapped, from my experience in my shop environment. Any unopened polyurethanes are stored upside down, securely factory sealed, with the air bubble at the bottom of the bottle. White and yellow glues are capped after cleaning the dispenser and stored without special concerns. This is what works best in my main shop. It is in the

basement of our home and being below ground level it is a dehumidified environment at a constant year-round temp of 60°F.

My local chapter holds elections each year and it is impossible to get members willing to be officers. Each election is like a visit to the dentist, painful in the silence until a few are shamed into 'volunteering' or the current officers are re-elected. Any suggestions?

From my years as chapters and membership chairman of the AAW, I witnessed your situation worldwide. It is the same situation as nearly all the woodturning clubs. I've seen it in the several chapters I belong to for the past 25 years or so of my membership. Those who are willing to step forward are too self-conscious to self-nominate. The others are either tired of serving for far too long or are willing to let someone else do the work while they enjoy the benefits. The key to having a robust, fresh leadership and having elections go smoothly is to plan. It behooves the current leadership to groom potential new leaders. Long before the date of the elections, have a slate of candidates who know and want to be on the ballot. Get the new and ambitious involved as well as encouraging some of the wallflowers. Have them help with events, demos, reach-out programmes, and more. They get visibility and feel involved – read less bashful. Sometimes this takes a while, so start early and make it a continuous process. Make it an ongoing, year-to-year process. It is rare that elections require ballot counting since there is not often more than one candidate. By election time, the current officers should have the others having been groomed knowing they will be nominating them. They should by then feel comfortable enough to accept. This really isn't rigging elections since the floor is always open for nominations of anyone. Remember that being a chapter leader doesn't involve being an accomplished turner and there isn't a job that can't be done by anyone willing to pay attention and learn from their predecessor. Even the treasurer requires little more than paying the bills at the direction of the executive and balancing the cheque book. It really isn't pay as such, but many clubs pay the officers dues in both the local and/or national organisations. A small token of appreciation.



4 I try to buy fresh adhesives in sizes I'll use up quickly. I try to keep them capped but don't agonise over forgetting **5** Polyurethanes have a nasty habit of hardening quickly with any storage time. I flip them over and store them upside down sealed well